



THE
ANNUAL REPORT
OF THE
MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH
AND THE
CHIEF SANITARY INSPECTOR
TO THE
ST. IVES BOROUGH COUNCIL
FOR THE YEAR
1948.

The Guildhall,
ST. IVES,
Cornwall.

Public Health Department,
The Guildhall,
ST. IVES,
Cornwall.

To the Mayor, Aldermen and Councillors
of the Borough of St. Ives.

Mr. Mayor and Gentlemen,

In presenting the Annual Report for 1948 it can indeed be said to have been an eventful year, first in the inception of the National Health Service, and secondly in the visit of the Boundary Commissioners.

The former being a long term matter can hardly have been expected to improve at once the facilities in the Borough, though Clinic premises at least should be provided, but the visit of the Boundary Commission was fraught with considerable possibilities. Both these matters are referred to below.

A considerable epidemic of whooping cough occurred but fortunately it was not attended with the mortality among young children that might have been expected. I must, however, record with regret that the response to appeals for diphtheria immunisation remains very poor indeed. "It may never happen" is a comforting doctrine, but those who practise it sometimes get a rude awakening.

In conclusion, I should like to thank the Members of the Council for their interest, and the Staff of the other Departments for their co-operation. I must particularly mention the constant help I have received from the Sanitary Inspector, Mr. G.M. Douglas, who at all times has been ready to do anything to assist.

I am, Mr. Mayor,
Your obedient Servant,

W.K. DUNSCOMBE.

Medical Officer of Health.

DEATHS FROM ALL CAUSES.

CAUSE.	MALE.	FEMALE.	TOTAL.
Whooping Cough.	-	1.	1.
Tuberculosis - Respiratory System.	1.	3.	4.
- Other Forms.	-	2.	2.
Cancer of Stomach and Duodenum.	-	3.	3.)
Cancer of Breast.	-	3.	3.)
Cancer of all Other Sites.	6.	6.	12.)
Intracranial Vascular Lesions.	4.	8.	12.
Heart Diseases.	14.	15.	29.
Other Disease of Circulatory System.	4.	6.	10.
Bronchitis.	-	1.	1.
Pneumonia.	-	2.	2.
Other Respiratory Diseases.	1.	1.	2.
Ulcer of Stomach or Duodenum.	1.	-	1.
Other Digestive Diseases.	1.	-	1.
Nephritis.	3.	3.	6.
Premature Births.	2.	-	2.
Congenital Malformation. Birth Injuries including Infant Diseases.	3.	1.	4.
Suicide.	-	2.	2.
Road Traffic Accident.	-	1.	1.
Other Violent Causes.	2.	1.	3.
All other Causes.	4.	4.	8.
Total	46.	63.	109.

PRINCIPAL CAUSES OF DEATH.

	<u>MALE.</u>	<u>FEMALE.</u>	<u>TOTAL.</u>
1. Heart Diseases.	14.	15.	29.
2. Cancer.	6.	12.	18.
3. Intracranial Vascular Lesions.	4.	8.	12.
4. Other Diseases of Circulatory System.	4.	6.	10.
5. Nephritis.	3.	3.	6.

STATISTICS - 1948.

1.	Population - Registrar General's Mid Year Estimate	...	...	8605.
2.	Area	...	...	4339 acres.
3.	No. of Inhabited Houses	...	...	3000 approx.
4.	Rateable Value	...	...	£80,965.
5.	Product of 1d Rate	...	...	£320.
6.	Live Births	...	...	70 Male. 62 Female. 132 Total. Rate per 1000 population 15.3
7.	Still Births	...	...	NIL.
8.	Deaths	...	...	46 Male. 63 Female. 109 Total. Rate per 1000 population 12.6
9.	Infant Deaths	...	...	5 Male. 4 Female. 9 Total. Rate per 1000 live births 68.1
10.	No. of Houses with piped water supply	...	...	2802.
11.	No. of Houses with no supply	...	...	182.

1. WATER SUPPLIES.

(a) These have been well maintained, though the difficulties at Halsetown are not yet resolved, and the village is still dependent on one well in the Inn Courtyard. In my opinion it is essential that the inhabitants of the village be given at least a standpipe supply at the earliest possible moment.

The supply from the Trenwith Shaft has now been proved to be adequate, and bacteriological samples have been satisfactory although the water is not treated in any way. I have already put on record my opinion that this is a mistake as it will prove a very material addition to the town's water resources and, if chlorinated, would then be entirely satisfactory. In general, dealing with the question of treating water supplies it must be said that in spite of the very excellent plant which deals with the supply from the Bussow reservoir, few towns of the reputation of St. Ives depend for a large proportion of their supplies on water which has not been subjected to treatment of any sort.

(b) Cornwall Water Survey. Although, under the proposals the Borough is to supply the Parishes of Zennor and Towednack in the West Penwith Rural District, it has not been possible to proceed with the Scheme which, of course, in addition is to augment the Borough's supplies also. It is hoped that it will be possible to get on with it at an early date as it is understood that no engineering difficulties are likely to be encountered.

2. SEWERAGE - Carbis Bay.

The problem of the properties below the level of the main sewer still exists and will not be solved until it is possible to lift the sewage from them up to the trunk sewer. This, of course, is a substantial height above them and if electricity is installed pumping costs must necessarily be incurred. None the less, at present they constitute a problem and should be dealt with speedily.

3. INFECTIOUS DISEASE.

The incidence except for the outbreak of whooping cough already mentioned was happily low. However, I regret to report that the response to diphtheria prevention by immunisation was practically negligible. The figures speak for themselves and it is hoped that the parents of children in the Borough under five don't want the sharp spur of a death from this disease to remind them of their duty to their young children. If ever there is a disease which can be prevented, diphtheria is one. It has been well described as the disease which you don't have if you don't want!

Tables shewing the incidence here and in the three other County Districts of this area are given in Appendix B.

4. FOOD POISONING.

In June a serious epidemic of food poisoning occurred at one of the Hotels. In view of its great importance this has already been the subject of a special report to the Council, copies of which were sent to the Minister. The salient features were that in all nearly fifty persons were affected at one Hotel including members of the Staff. No evidence of infection of food by carriers was discovered and the infecting medium appeared to be a mayonnaise made with a duck's egg. The department was not notified of the occurrence of these cases until 10 days after they had been ill, with the result that it was impossible to ascertain the exact medium although, from our subsequent enquiries, the mayonnaise seemed to be the only common food eaten by those affected. The non-notification to the department was, to put it mildly, unfortunate and it might have had even more serious consequences if any of the patients had died. Three were very ill indeed, but all fortunately recovered. It cannot be too strongly stressed that the Health Department exists to help in such cases and the sooner we are told, the better. In view of the possible infection by duck eggs all persons likely to use them were informed that they must not be used fresh but should be boiled for at least 8 minutes before using.

With its reputation as a holiday centre the Town cannot afford such lapses.

5. BOUNDARY COMMISSION.

The implications of the visit of the Commission are so great that no excuse is offered for mentioning this, as, whatever happens as the result of their decision, it must have a bearing on public health administration.

The writer attended the Enquiry at all four Authorities in the Penwith area, and the Borough's proposals were reasonably argued. In view of its present population and resources

as well as its ancient Charter it seems unlikely that at the worst there will be any substantial diminution of its present status, rather the reverse. It must be said, however, that in the absence of any final decision it is difficult for even supermen to plan adequately for the future until the Boundary question is settled. The recently announced proposal, therefore, to "liquidate" the Commission because its powers are not adequate is a serious administrative error. As the result of its visits to County Districts in a number of counties the Commission had already obtained most valuable information as to the suitable minimum size and financial status of county districts below which they should not be allowed to fall, and all this experience is now to be placed in the pigeon-holes. It is hoped that the new Government which is formed after the forthcoming general election will tackle the question properly and promptly. Meanwhile, more and more powers are being taken from the County Districts and soon we shall arrive at a regional organisation for every form of local government activity. This was one of the war's less satisfactory features, and remoteness is not a desirable attribute for local government.

6. PUBLIC CONVENIENCE ENQUIRY.

A public Enquiry by a Ministry of Health Engineering Inspector was held in August regarding the proposed provision of a public convenience at Westcott's Quay. Very considerable opposition to the proposal arose, in some instances from persons living quite a distance away, and after due consideration the Minister decided not to agree. However, this may well prove to be a Pyrrhic victory for those opposing the proposal as the present facilities in the centre of the town are hopelessly inadequate to deal with the numbers coming to the town in the season - and the tourist trade is now the town's greatest industry.

7. NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE.

A summary of the working of the Services operated by the Local Health Authority in this area is given in the Appendix.

The coming into operation of this Service has had little effect so far on the facilities available for the public in the Borough. The need for a proper Clinic is imperative, so that suggestions were made with a view to considering the use of Trewyn which, with its house and gardens, is favourably placed in the lower part of the Borough, and while, if a Clinic did eventuate in that area, it would necessarily be some distance from the Council's housing estates, the town is so built up that a site suitable for all present and future housing is practically impossible to obtain. It is hoped, therefore, that there will not be any long delay in constructing a Clinic, as, using for example pre-fabricated units, it should be possible to provide a building to house all the local authority clinic services in a relatively short time.

8. HOUSING.

Quite good progress was made with the Council's housing estate at Penbeagle. Last year I mentioned that the Borough had done really very well and, in spite of delays, the good progress has continued. However, the waiting list is still unfortunately long, and it was not possible to even attempt anything as regards slum clearance. Points of importance as far as re-housing is concerned are that cases of Pulmonary Tuberculosis or overcrowding, and especially when these are combined, are not, in my opinion, given sufficient priority. No points scheme should be absolutely rigid and take no account

of individual circumstances, and consequently there must be flexibility especially in dealing with the conditions mentioned, and also for expectant mothers.

The following are the figures for 1948:-

Built by Council	...	34.
Built by Private Enterprise	...	17.
Under Construction by Council	...	28.
Under Construction by Private Enterprise	...	8.

9. CAMPING SITES.

The need for these is recognised, but the need for their control is also important. Since, therefore, both the Town Planning Committee and the Borough are interested, a Conference was held with a view to deciding on sites which could more or less permanently be regarded as suitable camping grounds. At present, numbers use the Island but as it is one of the town's show places it is really not suitable for a permanent site, and when the others are properly developed it is hoped that its use for such a purpose can be discontinued entirely.

10. HYGIENE OF FOOD AND FOOD PREPARING PREMISES.

Considerable attention was given to this, more especially as regards Ice Cream, though other foods were by no means forgotten. On the whole the standard was fairly good and the essential point is to ensure by all means possible that adequate facilities for the washing of hands, i.e. towels, soap, and hot water are available to the staff engaged in food preparation. Paper towels and hot air hand drying machines are becoming increasingly available while there is almost an abundance of suitable soap substitutes on the market. There is, therefore, really no excuse for such amenities or necessities not being provided all over the country. This alone would go a long way to eliminating infections caused by food handlers.

REPORT OF SANITARY INSPECTOR FOR 1948.

1. MISCELLANEOUS VISITS.

Premises Visited re Complaints	...	384.
Re inspections	...	296.
Drain test - New and Repair work	...	123.
House Inspections	...	77.
Rodent Control Inspections	...	25.
Public Conveniences	...	42.
Camping Sites	...	12.
Factories	...	35.
Bakehouses	...	15.
Fumigations	...	6.
Ice Cream Premises	...	93.
Cafes	...	39.
Public Houses	...	3.

2. FOOD PREMISES.

All premises where food is prepared have been inspected frequently during the year and the need for cleanliness at all times impressed upon the persons handling food.

3. MILK.

Fourteen samples of milk were taken during the year from the retailers in the town selling ordinary milk - for bacteriological examination. The results received from the County Bacteriologist were :-

8 Passed. 6 Failed.

Two samples were taken for T.B. in the milk, both were returned as satisfactory.

4. ICE CREAM.

During the Summer 93 visits were made to ice cream manufacturers' premises, and 56 samples of ice cream were submitted to the County Analyst. The results were as follows :-

Grade 1	-	16.	Grade 2	-	17.
Grade 3	-	14.	Grade 4	-	9.

Registration of Premises. During the year seven premises were registered for the sale of ice cream.

5. UN SOUND FOOD CONDEMNED.

During the year the following articles of food were inspected and condemned as unfit for human consumption and were voluntarily surrendered :-

224 Tins of various food.	258 Peaches.
198 Tubes of Cod Roe Spread.	6 Stone of kippers.
24 Packets Cereals.	5 Stone of Hake.
18 Packets Soup.	48 Poussins.
1 Packet Dried Egg.	18 lbs Meat (Bone
25 lbs Dried Peaches.	Taint)

6. PUBLIC CLEANSING.

Collection and Disposal of House and Trade Refuse.

Collection is by means of two Karrier Bantam 7 cub. yds. lorries. Disposal of House and Trade refuse is at Hayle where, in conjunction with the West Penwith Rural District Council, controlled tipping is carried out.

Number of loads of refuse	
per week	... 33.
Approximate weight of refuse	
per week	... 62 tons 14 cwts.
Approximate weight of refuse	
per year	... 3,160 tons.
Approximate mileage per vehicle	
per year	... 18,000 miles.

7. ROAD SWEEPING.

The number of miles of road sweeping amounts to 14.1 miles of unclassified roads and 8.7 miles County Council roads.

8. SALVAGE.

The amount of salvage collected and dispatched during the year was 87 tons 12 cwts 1 qr. Value £656. 7. 6d. This is an increase of 8 tons 5 cwts (Value £116. 14. 6d) over last year's total.

9. RODENT CONTROL.

During the year the Rodent Operator has been successful in controlling the number of rats. It was estimated that 215 were poisoned, 47 trapped, and 43 mice trapped during the year and regular inspections were made of the sewers and Stennack River.

There is no doubt that the small number of rats found is due to the small diameter of the sewers which fill up during heavy rain and prevent rats from breeding in them. I would like to record my appreciation of the good work carried out by Mr. T. Nankervis.

10. FACTORIES ACTS 1937 - 1948.

During the year 35 inspections were made to the various types of factories, for the purpose of provisions as to health. 12 factories were found to require lime washing or small repairs, and all were complied with.

FOOD AND DRUGS ACT 1938.

Report for Year Ended 31st December, 1948.

I am indebted to Mr. H.M. Rundle of the Cornwall County Council (which is the Food and Drugs Authority) for the following figures of samples taken by his Department.

Name of Article.	No. of Samples Taken.	Genuine.	Adul- terated.	Remarks.
Milk	10.	9.	1.	4% added water - caution.
Sage & Onion Stuffing	1.	1.	-	
Ice Cream	5.	5.	-	
Saffron	1.	1.	-	
Butter	4.	4.	-	
Ka-Fat	1.	1.	-	
Baking Powder	2.	2.	-	
White Pepper	1.	1.	-	
Salted Shrimps	1.	1.	-	
Chocolate Spread	1.	1.	-	
Appleade	1.	1.	-	
Black Currant Flavour Cordial	1.	1.	-	
Black Currant Juice Cordial	1.	1.	-	
Malt Vinegar	1.	1.	-	
Total	31.	30.	1.	

APPENDIX A.
NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE.
Cornwall No. 1 Area.

The following is a brief report on the working of the National Health Service in this Area.

1. Cornwall No. 1 Area comprises:-

Population (Mid-Year 1948)

Penzance Borough	...	...	19,920
St. Ives Borough	...	...	8,605
St. Just	...	...	4,047
West Penwith	...	...	17,770
Total			<u>50,342</u>

Total Area - 83,000 Acres.

The Area Health Office is located at Penzance.

The administration is carried out by the Assistant County Medical Officer who is the Medical Officer of Health for the County Districts.

The position in this Area was complicated considerably by the fact that it was the only Area in the County where a whole-time Medical Officer of Health was functioning before the Act began. It was therefore impossible to combine the work done by the Medical Officer of Health for the County Districts and that done by him for the County Council into one office which is so desirable from the point of view of economic administration, but in any case it is certainly wrong that the Area Medical Officer should have three offices in one town which is the present position in Penzance.

2. Since by the end of December this service had only been running six months it is obviously too soon to pass any detailed comments. However, it could be said that on the whole the take over of the Maternity and Child Welfare Service from Penzance Borough was smooth and that the Service was gradually getting into its stride. It had also been arranged that Infant Welfare Clinics would be commenced in St. Just twice per month starting from January, 1949 and active steps were being taken to acquire a suitable site for a Clinic at Hayle, while careful consideration was being given to proposals for satisfactory clinic accommodation in St. Ives where the present arrangements are far from ideal. With its population of nearly 9,000 St. Ives deserves a really good Clinic.

In Penzance, although proposals for the alteration of the old Science School in Morrab Road to provide full Clinic facilities had been approved by all parties interested (Ministries of Health, and Education, County Council and the Borough Council), no work had been started on the building by the end of the year.

3. Certain major points with regard to administration should be re-considered at a very early date. These are:-

- (a) The Area Committees have very little power indeed.
- (b) The Medical Officer of Health as the Assistant County Medical Officer should be the administering Medical Officer for all the County Council medical services in the Area. At present this is not so, especially as regards the School Medical Service.
- (c) Medical Officers of Health should also be co-opted members of any House Committee of the Hospital Management Committee formed in their Areas. This is most certainly not the case in this Area now, with the result that information about projects in the Hospital, which may easily have profound effects on public health provisions and amenities has to be obtained second or third hand. This should not be if there is to be proper co-ordination throughout the Service.

APPENDIX B.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

Disease.	Penzance.	West Penwith.	St. Ives.	St. Just.
Diphtheria	4	4	-	-
Scarlet Fever	4	7	5	-
Measles	18	33	-	8
Whooping Cough	7	4	35	-
Cerebro-Spinal Fever	-	-	-	-
Acute Polio- myelitis	-	1	-	-
Pneumonia	-	1	-	-
Erysipelas	-	2	-	-
Typhoid	-	1	-	-
Puerperal Pyrexia	-	-	1	-

DIPHTHERIA IMMUNISATION.
1948.

Area	Number of Children who Completed a full Course of Immunisation in 1948.			Number of Chil- dren Receiving Refresher Doses
	<u>Under 5.</u>	<u>5 - 14.</u>	<u>Total.</u>	
PENZANCE	356	23	379	463
ST. IVES	43	4	47	93
WEST PENWITH	186	7	193	277
ST. JUST	70	1	71	109

T U B E R C U L O S I S.
(1) NOTIFICATIONS AND DEATHS IN AGE GROUPS, 1948. (DEATHS GIVEN IN BRACKETS).

	1 - 5	5 - 15	15 - 20	20 - 25	25 - 35	35 - 45	45 - 65	Over 65	Total.
<u>Penzance.</u>									
<u>Pul.</u> M.	-	1	-	3 (1)	3 (1)	3 (1)	5	1 (1)	16 (4)
<u>Pul.</u> F.	-	-	2	1 (1)	2	- (1)	1 (1)	1	7 (3)
Non Pul. M.	1	1	-	-	1	-	1	-	4
Non Pul. F.	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	2
<u>West Penwith.</u>									
<u>Pul.</u> M.	-	-	-	1	2	- (2)	1 (1)	-	4 (3)
<u>Pul.</u> F.	-	-	2 (2)	-	1	-	1	-	4 (2)
Non Pul. M.	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Non Pul. F.	-	1	1	-	1	-	-	-	3
<u>St. Just.</u>									
<u>Pul.</u> M.	-	1	-	1	1 (2)	1	1	- (1)	5 (3)
<u>Pul.</u> F.	-	-	-	-	1	-	- (1)	-	1 (1)
Non Pul. M.	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Non Pul. F.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<u>St. Ives.</u>									
<u>Pul.</u> M.	-	-	-	2	-	2 (1)	2	-	6 (1)
<u>Pul.</u> F.	-	-	- (1)	3 (1)	3 (1)	-	1	-	7 (3)
Non Pul. M.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Non Pul. F.	-	- (1)	-	-	-	-	-	-	- (1)
Total Notifications									62.
Total Deaths									21.

(2) Numbers on Register on the 31st December, 1948.				
	<u>Pulmonary.</u>		<u>Non Pulmonary.</u>	
	<u>Males.</u>	<u>Females.</u>	<u>Males.</u>	<u>Females.</u>
Penzance	84	52	16	32
West Penwith	66	62	26	51
St. Ives	33	35	7	17
St. Just	30	14		13
	<u>Total.</u>		<u>Total.</u>	
	136	136	16	32
	128	128	26	51
	68	68	7	17
	44	44		13

